

2021 MAY 27 AM 10: 53

**Planning Board Minutes – September 29, 2020**

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on **September 29, 2020** at 4:15 pm over Zoom. **Present:** Chairman Keven Desmarais, James Frates, David Crose, Christopher Mello, Robert Jose, Debra Robbins

Chairman Desmarais read the opening meeting statement authorizing virtual meetings due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Continued Public Hearing – Proposed Changes to the Town of Freetown Protective By-Laws, Article 11 Zoning By-Laws

Chairman Desmarais called the public hearing back to order.

Chairman Desmarais said the during the last meeting the Board came to the consensus that having just a setback change is not enough and it does not give flexibility to change the setback or visual buffers depending on the individual project. **Chairman Desmarais** said the Board's options are to amend the proposed text on Town Meeting Floor, to remand it back to the Planning Board for further review, or withdraw the article and schedule a public hearing to discuss changes to the Rules and Regulations for Site Plan Review. **Chairman Desmarais** said he does not believe that the proposed By-Law change does enough in its current form. **Mr. Mello** said there needs to be a structure in place to ensure that the buffer is adequate and that additional buffering may be required even if there already trees on the lot. **Chairman Desmarais** agreed and added that trees can thin out over time so even if it is an adequate buffer at the time of construction it might cease to be later on. **Mr. Frates** said he would like to vote to withdraw because it would give more time. **Ms. Robbins** said she agrees with withdrawing the article. **Mr. Jose** said the Board needs more restrictions put in place for solar arrays but also needs the latitude to waive certain regulations on an application-to-application basis. **Mr. Jose** added restricting solar in the Rules and Regulations grants the Board flexibility which they would not have if these restrictions were in the By-Law. **Mr. Jose** suggested having a minimum setback and definitions in the By-Laws and to add any restrictions to the Rules and Regulations. **Chairman Desmarais** said that the Board does not necessarily need to require a distance and that maybe just a requirement to provide a vegetative buffer that provides sufficient visual screening. **Mr. Jose** said he would like any proposed changes to the Solar By-Law to be ready for inclusion in the June Town Meeting.

Chairman Desmarais suggested scheduling a public hearing discuss possible changes to the Rules and Regulations for November 10th. **Mr. Jose** agreed.

Mr. Jose made a motion to withdraw the article proposing changes to Article 11 Section 28 of the Zoning By-laws. **Ms. Robbins** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Desmarais thanked everyone involved for the discussion.

The Items below were discussed before the Board voted to close the public hearing

Discussion on surety for the Form C Subdivision "The Residences at the Assonet Inn"

Chairman Desmarais said this subdivision plan has been approved but there is hiccup because one of the parcels was taken by tax title by the Town and then bought back by the previous owner who it was taken from. **Chairman Desmarais** said the appropriate documents were not recorded with the registry of deeds and that there is an article at town meeting to address this. **Chairman Desmarais** said until this situation is rectified this project is at a standstill.

Receive Minutes/ Schedule of Bills Payable

Chairman Desmarais said the bills have already been signed by him and copies have been sent out to the rest of the Board.

Continued Public Hearing – Proposed Changes to the Town of Freetown Protective By-Laws, Article 11 Zoning By-Laws

Chairman Desmarais explained that the Board closed the public hearing portion of the public hearing but they still need to close the public hearing completely.

Mr. Jose made a motion to close the public hearing on the discussion for the article proposing changes to Article 11 Section 28 of the Zoning By-laws. **Mr. Frates** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Jose made a motion to adjourn. **Ms. Robbins** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Nils McKay